

**REMARKS**

The Office action dated April 1, 2004 and the cited references have been carefully considered.

**Status of the Claims**

Claims 5, 6, and 34 are pending. Claims 6 and 34 are allowed.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yukinobu et al. (U.S. Patent 5,820,843; hereinafter "Yukinobu '843"). The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for the reasons set forth below.

**Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)**

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yukinobu '843. The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Yukinobu does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 5, as amended.

"To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art." M.P.E.P. § 2143.03, p. 2100-128 (8<sup>th</sup> ed., Rev. 1, Feb. 2003).

Yukinobu '843 does not teach or suggest an acicular body of an oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of gallium, thallium, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof, as is recited in claim 5.

Since Yukinobu '843 does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of claim 5, this claim is patentable over Yukinobu '843 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are patentable and in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is requested. Allowance of claims at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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